

Appl. No. 09/727,857
Amdt. dated 4/13/04

Amendments to the Specification

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 3, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- "Spunbonded fibers" refers to small diameter fibers that are formed by extruding molten thermoplastic material as filaments from a plurality of fine capillaries of a spinneret. Such a process is disclosed in, for example, US Patent 3,802,817 to Matsuki et al. The fibers may also have shapes such as those described, for example, in US Patents Patent 5,277,976 to Hogle et al. which describes fibers with unconventional shapes. ---

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 4, line 8, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- "Bonded carded web" refers to webs that are made from staple fibers which are sent through a combing or carding unit, which separates or breaks apart and aligns the staple fibers in the machine direction to form a generally machine ~~direction-oriented~~ direction oriented fibrous nonwoven web. This material may be bonded together by methods that include point bonding, ultrasonic bonding, adhesive bonding, etc. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 6, line 21, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- This fibrous material is one having fibers with very small average diameters (micro-fine ~~fibers~~; fibers), on the order of tenths of a micron, preferably from a positive amount to 0.5 microns, and great lengths. This small diameter results in very high surface area per unit length of fiber, also allowing it to perform as a binder. In way of contrast, typical cellulosic fibers, for example, have diameters from about 30 to 300 microns and typical nonwoven thermoplastic fibers have diameters from about 7 to 50 microns. The fibrous material preferably has a negative charge, which also aids its ability to perform as a binder. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 8, line 21, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- Nonwoven webs are typically made from a number of processes such as spunbonding and meltblowing, which involve the melting of thermoplastic polymer and deposition onto a conveyor belt or "forming wire"; bonding and carding, involving the orienting and bonding of individual fibers; coforming, where fibers are added to a meltblowing process; and airlaying, which involves the air-driven deposition of fibers. Once formed, nonwoven webs may be directly used to produce products or may be stored for ~~layer later~~ use. The slurry of micro-fine fibers

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may be deposited onto the nonwoven web as it is produced or may be deposited at a later time when it is being used in the production of a product. --

Please replace the paragraph beginning at page 11, line 16, with the following rewritten paragraph:

-- The vertical wicking test result data is given in the Table and in the Figure in graphical form. The Figure is a graph of the data from the Table for airlaid material with time in 100 second increments on the X-axis and vertical wicking distance in 20 mm increments on the Y-axis. ~~The lowest line on the Figure, denoted by diamonds, has zero weight percent CELLULON® microbial cellulose added.~~ The lowest line on the Figure, denoted by diamonds, has zero weight percent CELLULON® microbial cellulose added. The line on the Figure denoted by squares has 1.2 weight percent CELLULON® microbial cellulose added. The line on the Figure denoted by triangles has 2.4 weight percent CELLULON® microbial cellulose added. The line on the Figure denoted by large Xs has 4.8 weight percent CELLULON® microbial cellulose added and is the top line of the Figure from about 400 seconds onward. --